



Wisconsin Whey Working Group to Release Report

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MADISON – A year after the Wisconsin Whey Opportunities Working Group first met at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the group has finalized its report. The *Wisconsin Whey Study* will be released in a presentation on Thursday, April 18 at the Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference in La Crosse.

“Whey has transitioned from a dairy processing waste product to a valuable food and feed source that is marketable around the world,” said DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel. “I am pleased the Wisconsin Whey Opportunities Working Group has completed a report summarizing current challenges in whey processing and forming recommendations to make whey a great economic opportunity for Wisconsin.”

As the nation’s top producer of cheese, Wisconsin also is the top producer of whey, a liquid that is separated during cheese making and high in protein. Whey is desirable for use as a food ingredient through further refinement, a feed source for farm livestock and feedstock in bioreactors producing energy.

The group started its work by surveying cheese plants and visiting whey processors to discover current limitations and ways to capture the value of whey. A study of investment models evaluated options for whey processing by cheese plants of various sizes.

In the report, the group outlines obstacles and prospects for growth in whey processing. A highlight of the report is a Whey Purchasers Directory, a first-of-its-kind resource that allows dairy entities to access contact information and type of whey products purchased by whey processors.

The seven specific recommendations from the report will be shared at the Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference by Dr. John Lucey of Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research and Norm Monsen of DATCP. Recommendations include the need for continued research of technical issues and a creation of best practice parameters for shipment of raw whey.

The Wisconsin Whey Opportunities Working Group met monthly. Participants included: DATCP, the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

To read the *Wisconsin Whey Study* after Thursday’s release, visit <http://datcp.wi.gov> and search “whey.” Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference details are available at <https://cheeseconference.org/>.

For more information on the Wisconsin Whey Opportunities Working Group, contact DATCP’s Norm Monsen at 608-224-5135 or norm.monsen@wisconsin.gov.

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